

## Class Exercise - 3.1

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**Assignment ID:** 1390

**Submission:** Save this Word document with your answers as a PDF file and upload the PDF file to Canvas.

### Case in Point 3.1: Sunrise Software

A lively discussion is under way at Sunrise Software, where you are a project manager. The main question is whether the person-days concept has limitations. In other words, if a task will require 100 person-days, does it matter whether two people in 50 days, five people in 20 days, 10 people in 10 days, or some other combination that adds up to 100 performs the work?

Programmers Paula and Ethan seem to think it does not matter. On the other hand, Hector, a systems analyst, says it is ridiculous to think that any combination would work. To support his point, he offers this extreme example: Could 100 people accomplish a task estimated at 100 person-days in one day?

- Is Hector correct? Why or Why not?
  - Hector is correct, and I think his example clarifies why exactly. There is going to be an optimal, or close to optimal way to organize the management of a project, and 100 people in one day is obviously not one. People learn how a project is to be developed over a period of iteration, and just unleashing a giant crew with rushed instructions and specifications will be a disaster that will simply not be finished in that one day. People will be several times less productive, and may require at least 500 aggregate person hours.
- If so, what are the limits in the “people versus days” equation?
  - See above
- Taking the concept a step further, is there an optimum number of people to be assigned to a task?
  - Yes, or at least an optimal range of people.
- If so, how would that number be determined?
  - Whatever the systems analyst(s) is confident they can manage with the resources and staff they have at their disposal.
- You need to offer some guidance at the next project team meeting. What will you say?
  - As project manager, I would need to specify the constraints I have in managing this project, and what kind of schedule I would need in order for me and my team to succeed.